

- 1300.01 General
- 1300.02 References
- 1300.03 [Legal Requirements](#)
- 1300.04 [Roadside Classification Plan](#)
- 1300.05 [Roadside Manual](#)
- 1300.06 [Project Development](#)
- 1300.07 [Documentation](#)

1300.01 General

It is WSDOT policy to employ roadside treatments for the protection and restoration of community and roadside character as designated in the *Roadside Classification Plan* (RCP) and described in the *Roadside Manual*. WSDOT is committed to community-based context sensitive design, which is reflected in the Context Sensitive Solutions Executive Order (E 1028.00) and the 2003-2022 Washington Transportation Plan (WTP).

Whenever a project disturbs, or adds elements to, the roadside, the project is responsible for restoring roadside functions. This includes contour grading, visual elements (such as walls, lighting, signs, and bridges), pedestrian movement, vegetation, and stormwater treatment. The extent of restoration is dependent upon the source of funding. Figure 1300-1 and the following paragraph summarize the guidance found in the *Roadside Classification Plan*.

| Funding | Restore Roadside Functions Beginning to End of Project R/W Line to R/W Line | Restore Only Roadside Functions That are Impacted by the Project |
|--|---|--|
| Mobility (I1) Economic Development (I3) | √ | |
| Safety Improvement (I2) Environmental Retrofit (I4) Preservation (P) | | √ |

Funding Source Determines Extent of Restoration

Figure 1300-1

For Mobility (I1) and Economic Development (I3) programs, the project is responsible for restoring the entire roadside from right of way line to right of way line and from beginning to end of project using the guidelines found in the RCP. For Preservation (P), Safety Improvement (I2), and Environmental Retrofit Program (I4) projects, the project is responsible for restoring roadside functions that are disturbed by the project, using the guidelines found in the RCP.

The *roadside* is the area outside the traveled way. This applies to all lands managed by WSDOT and may extend to elements outside the right of way boundaries. This includes unpaved median strips and auxiliary facilities such as rest areas, roadside parks, viewpoints, heritage markers, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, wetlands and their associated buffer areas, stormwater treatment facilities, park and ride lots, and quarries and pit sites.

The roadside is managed to fulfill operational, environmental, visual, and auxiliary functions. In reality, these functions are interrelated and inseparable. One element, such as vegetation, can provide multiple functions simultaneously. For example, vegetation provides erosion prevention and sediment control, stormwater quality and quantity control, may provide distraction screening, and may provide screening of the road from the view of adjacent residents. Roadside functions are described in detail in the *Roadside Manual*, (M 25-30).

The design of a roadside project incorporates site conditions, commitments, and the extent of need. Roadside development concepts covered elsewhere in the *Design Manual* are:

- Contour grading (Chapter 1310)
- Fencing (Chapter 1460)
- Irrigation (Chapter 1330)
- [Jurisdiction](#) (Chapters 325, 330, 700)
- Noise barriers (Chapter 1140)
- Retaining walls (Chapter 1130)

- Roadside safety (Chapter 700)
- Safety rest areas, roadside parks, view-points, and historical markers (Chapter 1030)
- Signs (Chapter 820)
- Traffic barriers (Chapter 710)
- Utilities (*Utilities Manual* and *Utilities Accommodation Policy*)
- Vegetation (Chapter 1320)

1300.02 References

Roadside Design Guide, AASHTO

Roadside Classification Plan, M 25-31, WSDOT

Roadside Manual, M 25-30, WSDOT

Utilities Accommodation Policy, M 22-86, WSDOT

Utilities Manual, M 22-87, WSDOT

Maintenance Manual, M 51-01, WSDOT

Understanding Flexibility in Transportation Design – Washington, WSDOT (Dec 2004)

1300.03 Legal Requirements

The following paragraphs represent a partial list of legal requirements relating to roadside work. Further laws, regulations, and policies can be found in the *Roadside Manual*, Section 200.

Washington Administrative Code (WAC)

173-270-040 requires the department to establish and maintain stable plant communities that resist encroachment by undesirable plants, noxious weeds, and other pests. It also requires a vegetation management plan that includes operational, aesthetic, and environmental standards. <http://www.leg.wa.gov/wac/index.cfm?fuseaction=Section&Section=173-270-040>

WAC 468-34-340 requires utilities to repair or replace unnecessarily removed or disfigured trees and shrubs, and specifies vegetation management practices when utilities use highway right of way. <http://www.leg.wa.gov/wac/index.cfm?fuseaction=Section&Section=468-34-340>

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.40.010

states that planting and cultivating of any shrubs, trees, hedges or other domestic or native ornamental growth, the improvement of roadside facilities and view points, and the correction of unsightly conditions upon the right of way of any state highway is declared to be a proper state highway purpose.

RCW 47.40.020 authorizes the department to expend funds for this purpose. <http://www.leg.wa.gov/RCW/index.cfm?fuseaction=chapterdigest&chapter=47.40>

RCW 47.40.040 requires screening or removal of junkyards, located outside a zoned industrial area and within 1000 feet of the nearest edge of the right of way, so they are not visible from the traveled way. The department is authorized to acquire land for the purposes of screening these junkyards. <http://www.leg.wa.gov/RCW/index.cfm?section=47.41.040&fuseaction=section>

Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 23

CFR 752 “Highway Beautification Act” furnishes guidelines and prescribes policies regarding landscaping and scenic enhancement programs, safety rest areas, scenic overlooks, and information centers. Policy statement (a) states “highway esthetics is a most important consideration in the Federal aid highway program. Highways must not only blend with our natural social, and cultural environment, but also provide pleasure and satisfaction in their use.” <http://frwebgate6.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=44327678878+12+0+0&WAISaction=retrieve>

United States Code 23 USC 319, On

Federal-aid highways, the costs of landscape and roadside development, including acquisition and development of rest areas and land necessary for the restoration, preservation, and enhancement of scenic beauty adjacent to such highways is authorized. <http://uscode.house.gov/uscode-cgi/fastweb.exe?search>

For any work in, or near wetlands, **Section 404 of the Clean Water Act** may apply. The act requires a permit to discharge dredged or fill materials into most waters of the United States, including wetlands. The Section 404 permitting process requires advanced planning and coordination with the permitting agency: the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Work with the regional environmental office for guidance on the 404 permit.

The *Roadside Classification Plan* and the *Roadside Manual* provide policy and guidance for the manner in which WSDOT implements these laws.

1300.04 Roadside Classification Plan

The *Roadside Classification Plan* (M25-31) coordinates and guides the management of Washington State highway roadsides within a framework of roadside character classifications. It provides policy and criteria for roadside restoration and advocates the use of native plants, integrated vegetation management (IVM), and a long-term management approach to achieve sustainable roadsides.

1300.05 Roadside Manual

The *Roadside Manual* establishes a common basis for consistent roadside management decisions statewide. It shows the links and coordination necessary between all WSDOT partners responsible for roadside activities.

It also establishes a convenient and accessible reference for new and previously unpublished material related to roadside management including planning, design, construction, and maintenance. In addition, the manual supplements statewide roadside criteria established in the *Roadside Classification Plan*.

A partial example of information to be found in the Roadside Manual includes:

- Federal, state, and departmental roadside law and policy.
- Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Safety Rest Areas and Scenic Byways.

- Roadside treatments such as erosion control, landform grading, soil bioengineering, wetland mitigation, and vegetation restoration.

See the *Roadside Manual* table of contents for more information on chapters in the manual.

1300.06 Project Development

The region's Landscape Architect designs, supervises, has approval authority of, and stamps roadside restoration and revegetation plans, and is responsible for coordinating the visual elements within highway corridors. The region's Landscape Architect also designs and supervises other roadside work, such as site design for park and ride lots or safety rest areas, to ensure roadside restoration is designed and constructed to WSDOT standards. The Landscape Architect is also responsible for visual discipline reports for environmental documentation. The Headquarters (HQ) Roadside & Site Development Unit will do roadside design, visual impact assessment, and construction inspection work for the project offices in regions without a Landscape Architect.

There are typically two types of roadside restoration projects pertaining to vegetation that are related to roadway construction projects. The first type is work related to regulatory requirements. This work typically must occur at the time of impact to an identified resource in order to meet permit requirements. These projects will typically be a part of the roadway construction contract. The second type of project is the restoration of construction impacts to meet WSDOT policy requirements as outlined in the RCP. It is often advisable to do this revegetation work as a separate contract because roadside restoration is done after the road construction is completed. At that time, all impacts can be identified that may be different than anticipated during the original project design, the prime contractor can be specialized in roadside work, and plant establishment periods can last between 3 and 10 years and extend the roadway contract period. The Landscape Architect typically administers this contract with funding from the project.

1300.07 Documentation

A list of the documents that are required to be preserved in the Design Documentation Package (DDP) or the Project File (PF) is on the following website:
<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/eesc/design/projectdev/>